

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 AF-04 NEA-06 ISO-00 EURE-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00

USIE-00 INRE-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01 INR-05

L-02 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-15

SAM-01 IO-10 /070 W

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FM AMEMBASSY MADRID

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 568

INFO USUN IMMEDIATE 446

AMEMBASSY RABAT

AMEMBASSY NOUAKCHOTT

AMEMBASSY ALGIERS

C O N F I D E N T I A L MADRID 7540

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, SP, MO, SS, AG, UN

SUBJ: SPANISH POSITION WITH REGARD TO THE SPANISH
SAHARA

1. MINISTRY FOREIGN AFFAIRS DIRECTOR GENERAL FOR
INTERNATIONAL POLITICAL ORGANIZATIONS FERNANDO BENITO
MESTRE HAD FOLLOWING TO SAY WITH REGARD TO SPANISH
SAHARA DURING COURTESY CALL BY CHARGE TODAY.
A. SPAIN IS PREPARED TO ACCEPT REFERRAL OF
THE SAHARA ISSUE TO THE INTERNATIONAL COURT OF JUSTICE
FOR AN ADVISORY OPINION BUT WANTS QUESTIONS REFERRED TO
BE JURIDICALLY APPROPRIATE AND TO COVER ALL PERTINENT
POINTS NOT JUST THOSE RAISED BY MOROCCO. IN THIS
REGARD, SPAIN BELIEVES REFERRAL RESOLUTION SHOULD
BE CONSIDERED NOT JUST BY UN 4TH COMMITTEE, BUT
ALSO BY 6TH COMMITTEE WHICH HAS JURIDICAL
RESPONSIBILITY. SPAIN THEREFORE WILL BE APPROACHING
FRIENDS IN THE UN, INCLUDING THE US, TO SEEK
ASSISTANCE IN SEEING THAT THE 6TH COMMITTEE HAS
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AN OPPORTUNITY TO CONSIDER THE RESOLUTION.

B. SPAIN WOULD BE WILLING TO ACCEPT A POSTPONEMENT OF THE REFERENDUM IN THE SAHARA IF THE UN SHOULD DETERMINE THAT A POSTPONEMENT WERE DESIRABLE WHILE THE ICJ ADVISORY OPINION WERE BEING AWAITED. IN FACT THE REFERRAL OF THE ISSUE TO THE ICJ FOR AN ADVISORY OPINION COUPLED WITH A POSTPONEMENT OF THE REFERENDUM MIGHT PROVIDE A USEFUL COOLING-OFF PERIOD OF A YEAR OR SO AND AN OPPORTUNITY IN THAT TIME FURTHER TO EXPLORE THE POSSIBILITY OF NEGOTIATING A SOLUTION WITH MOROCCO WHICH WAS ALSO ACCEPTABLE TO THE OTHER PARTIES CONCERNED. IT COULD ALSO PROVIDE AN OPPORTUNITY FOR A UN VISIT TO THE SAHARA TO OBSERVE FIRTHAND CIRCUMSTANCES.

C. IN BENITO'S "PERSONAL" AND CONFIDENTIAL VIEW, A POSSIBLE FORMULAR FOR A N ULTIMATE NEGOTIATED SOLUTION MIGHT BE AN AUTONOMOUS SAHARA WHOSE STATUS WAS GUARANTEED BY SPAIN, MOROCCO, MAURITANIA AND ALGERIA. UNDER THIS FORMULA, THERE MIGHT ALSO BE ARRANGEMENTS FOR OUTSIDE PARTICIPATION IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF SAHARAN RESOURCES, AND FOR AN INTERIM PERIOD SPAIN MIGHT CONTINUE TO ASSIST IN THE CONDUCT OF SAHARA'S FOREIGN AFFAIRS. SPAIN WOULD HOPE THROUGH SUCH A FORMULA TO PROTECT SAHARA'S RIGHT OF SELF-DETERMINATION, TO RECOUP ITS INVESTMENT IN THE SAHARA, AND TO PROVIDE FOR AMICABLE RELATIONS AND REASONABLE SECURITY IN THE AREA.

D. SPAIN HAS NOTED CONSIDERABLE TENSION BETWEEN ALGERIA AND MOROCCO OVER THE SAHARA. MOROCCO TELLS SOME QUESTIONERS THAT ITS PURPOSE IN SEEKING REFERRAL OF THE ISSUE TO THE ICJ IS TO COOL THE ISSUE OFF AND TO GAIN TIME. YET IT CONTINUES TO ACT AS THOUGHT IT WISHED TO END UP WITH FULL CONTROL OVER ALL OR MOST OF THE SAHARA. ALGERIA IS CONCERNED ABOUT THE POSSIBILITY THAT MOROCCO MIGHT EVENTUALLY GAIN FULL CONTROL OVER THE SAHARA BECAUSE IT WANTS IN SOME MANNER TO PRESERVE AN ASSURED OUTLET TO THE ATLATIC THROUGH THE SAHARA. MAURITANIA IS ALSO CONCERNED ABOUT HAVING COMMON BORDER WITH MOROCCO. OTHER AFRICAN COUNTRIES ARE CONCERNED ABOUT A POSSIBLE DECISION

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BY THE ICJ WHICH COULD UPSET THE GENERAL ACCEPTANCE OF COLONIAL BORDERS AS THE BASIS FOR CURRENT BORDERS.

E. EXISTING SUBVERSIVE ACTIVITIES IN SPANISH SAHARA ARE IN THE MAIN UNDERTAKEN BY A SMALL GROUP OF YOUNG NATIONALISTS WHO ARE IMPATIENT FOR EARLY INDEPENDENCE AND WHO DO NOT UNDERSTAND THAT SAHARA WILL HAVE TO BE UNDER THE PROTECTIVE

WING OF SOME COUNTRY OR COUNTRIES FOR AN INDEFINITE
PERIOD IN THE FUTURE. THOSE NATIONALISTS ARE
RECEIVING SMALL AMOUNT OF FINANCING FROM LIBYA
THROUGH ALGERIA. MOST OF THE SAHARAN POPULATION
FAVORS CONTINUED TIES WITH SPAIN, HOWEVER.
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